

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7878

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2066

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN EINV SHUM ES
SUBJ: IFI LOANS - EL SALVADOR

REF: STATE 103956, SAN SALVADOR 2037

1. PURSUANT TO REQUEST OF PRESIDENT ROMERO, I WAS RECEIVED ON APRIL 27 BY VICE PRESIDENT ASTACIO AND MINISTER OF PLANNING REYES TO BOTH OF WHOM I PRESENTED THE CONTENT OF STATE 103956 STATING USG INABILITY ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS TO SUPPORT TWO OF THE THREE IMMINENT IFI LOANS. I INFORMED THEM OF PRESIDENT ROMERO'S REACTION PRECEDING DAY AS SET FORTH IN PARAS 5-7 OF SAN SALVADOR 2037.

2. BOTH GOES OFFICIALS LISTENED ATTENTIVELY, TOOK NOTES, AND IN PARTICULAR NOTED THE ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIONS SUGGESTED IN PARA 4(A) OF STATE 103956 AS POSSIBLY CAPABLE OF AFFECTING USG ATTITUDE AND DECISION ON ANTEL AND CATTLE DEVELOPMENT LOANS.

3. VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF PLANNING WERE VISIBLY DISTURBED BY USG POSITION. AS PRESIDENT ROMERO HAD, THEY PROTESTED THAT USG WAS ACCEPTING AT FACE VALUE A
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PARTISAN VERSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION BEING DISSEMINATED BY ENEMIES OF GOES. THEY PLACED PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS UPON CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF EL SALVADOR'S POLARIZED CATHOLIC CHURCH--NAMELY ARCHBISHOP ROMERO AND JESUIT ACTIVISTS. MINISTER OF PLANNING SAID THAT ELEMENTAL NORMS OF COURTESY AND JUSTICE ALLOW ACCUSED TO FACE AND ANSWER HIS ACCUSER, BUT HERE GOES

WAS BEING ACCUSED, JUDGED AND FOUND GUILTY BEFOREHAND
AND THEN GIVEN 48 HOURS TO DISPROVE CHARGES BEFORE
MEETING OF INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE.

4. VICE PRESIDENT ASTACIO REMINDED ME OF HIS OWN
COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND HIS EFFORTS ON THEIR
BEHALF. SOME OF ACTIONS SUGGESTED IN PARA 4(A) WERE
IN HIS VIEW ENTIRELY GOOD AND DESIRABLE BUT IT WAS
PERSONALLY DISTASTEFUL FOR HIM TO ACCEPT THE LINKAGE
BETWEEN THEM AND THE SPECIFIC LOANS AT STAKE.

5. IN CLOSING OUR CONVERSATION, IT WAS CONFIRMED THAT
GOES WOULD WORK TO ACHIEVE AND DEMONSTRATE MEANINGFUL
HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS BY LATTER MAY, WHEN LOANS WOULD
BE RESCHEDULED FOR CONSIDERATION, AND THAT IN THE
MEANWHILE I SHOULD BE IN CONTINUING TOUCH WITH VICE
PRESIDENT ASTACIO AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR ROJAS TO
MAINTAIN ONGOING DIALOGUE WITH RESPECT TO THEIR EFFORTS.
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